326 First, there is that of the blacksmith (saba or sahaba in the local tongue). Two kinds of blacksmiths may be distinguished among the Mossi. First, the blacksmiths who are gathered into separate villages or in large special quarters within the village, both cases being frequent in the northern part of Mossi territory, and secondly the isolated blacksmiths, such as those of Ouagadougou for example.

325 326 The blacksmiths who live in separate villages or quarters smelt the iron ore in large furnaces in the bush. They do this once a year, during the dry season, and the process takes one month.

The whole blacksmith village sets down to the task and builds a certain number of blast furnaces, at the ratio of one for every two blacksmiths.

The furnaces are built of red earth near the hills that contain iron ore, and it takes five days to build one of them. Once this is done each blacksmith pair takes over a furnace and uses it. The smiths do not use it together, incidentally, but each one in turn.

Our blacksmiths break up the soil with a soumbéré or taré. They break up pieces of ore and pile them near the furnace. They spread out a layer of dry wood at the bottom of the furnace, then a layer of ore, then another layer of wood, another layer of ore, etc., up to the top. Then the fire is lit.

The fire is stirred with bellows and kept up for three days. At the end of this period of time, the doors made at the bottom of the blast furnace are opened. The iron escapes through these special openings, which are distinct from the permanently open doors through which the slag runs out. On the fourth day the iron has cooled off, and it is removed from the little pits into which it has flowed. It is broken with an iron mallet and returned to the furnace.

The total labor lasts one month. Every evening our blacksmiths return to the village. Some of them produce ten loads of iron /513/ (about 300 kilograms), others only two or three (60 or 90 kilograms).

326 135 423 As for isolated blacksmiths, they do not smelt iron. They buy it from the blacksmiths of the Yatenga (Ouahigouya circle) who are great iron smelters and who own small, famed ferruginous hills around Ouahigouya.

326 Mossi blacksmiths make ouaka, koutiaga, axes, knives, daggers, swords, spearheads, arrowheads, razors, iron bracelets for women, men, nobles, spoons, horse bits, stirrups, spurs, etc. They also make needles of considerable thickness which are worth [435] 10 cowries apiece, or five for 1 sou.

During the winter season, they hardly make anything beside ouaka.[1] During the dry season, they make all the other items.

411 They also make zandé, or clubs with iron tips. Let us say
326 a word about clubs, which are in a way the Mossi national weapon. A Mossi would believe himself dishonored if he were not to bear a club solemnly on his right shoulder wherever he goes. Even small boys carry them, proportioned to size, and they do this with no less solemnity than their elders.

Mossi clubs are of three kinds:

1. Some made wholly of wood, handle and body both, and carved all of one piece. They are called dori.

2. Others whose handle is made of wood, but whose head consists of a large round stone imbedded at the tip of the handle. These clubs are called gougou.

3. Finally, the clubs with a wooden handle and an iron mallet inserted perpendicularly at the tip of the handle. These are the zandé or zann'dé. Sometimes the handle is covered with hide, and this makes it richer and more handsome.

326 Blacksmiths make only the iron part of the zandé. The other kinds of clubs are made by the owners themselves.

Blacksmiths only make zandé on order. While they make ouaka and koutiaga in advance and have them taken /514/ to market in quantities, they only make zandé when someone comes and asks for one.

The Mossi blacksmiths, therefore, work sometimes on order and sometimes to build up their stock. They sell this stock at market through their children, just as their wives go there to sell the pottery they manufacture.

325 The tools used by Mossi blacksmiths are as follows:
413 1. A small anvil called kissiguiré, with a pointed iron piece underneath, which can be held in the hand or thrust into the ground.

[1] [i.e. A kind of large hoe, see p. 32. —Analyst]

325 413 2. An iron mallet called zinré which is used as a hammer to strike the above-mentioned anvil. These items are very small. The anvil is held in one hand and the mallet in the other.

3. A pair of tongs (iéougo) to pick the iron from the fire and put it on the anvil.

4. A hammer called kouadara, made of a thick, short, and solid wooden handle into which a long and narrow iron mallet has been driven to make a hammer.

5. A rasp (sodara or chandara), slightly curved, and hafted to a wooden handle.

6. A sort of small wedge to cut the iron (kitéga). This wedge is placed on the piece of iron to be cut, and it is hit with the mallet.

7. A small-sized tool called karé that consists of a curved blade, 3 centimeters long by 2 wide, hafted to a short piece of wood. The karé is used to sharpen knives.

8. The goatskin bellows (zougoudou).

Such are the tools of the Mossi blacksmith which, incidentally, he makes himself.

325 435

The mallet is worth	5,000 cowries	(5 francs)
The anvil	10,000 "	(10 francs)
The hammer	1,000 "	(1 franc)
The nippers	700 "	(0.70 francs)
The rasp	500 "	(0.50 francs)
The iron wedge	200 "	(0.20 francs)
The sharpener	200 "	(0.20 francs)

323 The wives of Mossi blacksmiths make pottery. They are not the only ones to do this, as we shall see later, but they do it, at least in the special blacksmith's villages and quarters.

They make pottery with bérédo, that special black earth, a kind of clay we have already mentioned in a previous chapter, not translated/. They crush and mash old canari and add this powder to the bérédo. This makes the pots stronger than if fresh bérédo were used. When the pots have been fashioned, the women leave them to dry in the sun for six or seven days. While this drying process is taking place, they gather firewood in the bush. Then they place a layer of wood in a round oven (about 1 1/2 meters high, very

326 In short, the blacksmith's profession is of greater consequence to him than anything else, although he avails himself of several other occupations.

[564] Mossi blacksmiths do not form a caste. That is to say, anyone can marry among them.

306 Let us proceed to the jewelers or copper workers (niaka in Mossi).
439 The Mossi have been familiar with copper for a long time, although West Africa does not produce it. The Yarsé have sought it at Ouanké, Kintampo, and even Kumasi from times immemorial. It comes from the coastal area, where it is brought by the Whites in the form of brass rods 30 or 40 centimeters long (like curtain rods). Nowadays, it is the British who supply the Gold Coast with copper, no doubt in the wake of the Portuguese and Dutch.

306 The niaka earns more money than the blacksmith. He buys the
301 copper rods from the Dioula and makes them into various items /517/ such as women's copper leggings adorned with crocodiles, and thick copper bracelets worn at the wrists and ankles by women and soroné
[435] (pages). Depending on their thickness, these bracelets sell for 2,500 to 20,000 cowries. He also makes women's copper hairpins, and low-price rings worth from 100 to 200 cowries.

306 Prior to the arrival of the French, these jewelers also made
532 copper objects depicting everyday scenes, landscapes, huts. The chiefs bought them, but now these objects, at least the more ancient ones, have become very difficult to obtain. It seems that the German physician Frobenius, when he passed through Mossi territory at the end of 1908, acquired some very beautiful specimens of ancient Mossi manufacture for an exorbitant price. Nowadays, one
[439] can imagine what the old industry was like by looking at the small items made at Ouagadougou by a few Europeanized Mossi who sell them on the spot for the benefit of local Whites. It might almost be said, therefore, that they manufacture them for export purposes. These items, made by the lost-wax process, are rather interesting and quite artistic for Blacks.

325 The tools of the niaka are about the same as those of the black-
306 smith:
43

1. The small portable anvil or kissiguiré.
2. The hammer or kouadara.
3. Shears (niougou) to pick copper pieces from the fire.

325 4. The iron rasp or sodara.
306 5. The sharpening tool or karé.
413 6. The iron wedge to cut copper (kétouga).
7. Shears to cut copper (mankasaga).
8. A few very primitive goatskin bellows.

306 As an example of a jeweler, may I present Sulémani Déréma, an inhabitant of Ouagadougou. He lives with his older brother, who is the head of the soukala and who has a wife and child. Sulémani himself has two wives and two children. A younger brother lives with them with his wife and child. Finally, there are other brothers in the soukala but they are not married (let us note in passing [592] that this soukala is exceptional, for the general rule among the /518/ Mossi is for every household to live separately; here, although they still live together, every household works separately).

Sulémani Déréma buys his copper at market, or else he works the copper furnished by his customers to order. He makes bracelets, rings, copper stirrups, etc.

306 He also works in the fields during the winter season, and like
241 the other households in the soukala, he does this on his own. Sulémani has two fields in the bush, one of small millet and another of large white millet, and in addition he grows maize around the soukala on the stretch of ground allotted him by the head of the soukala.

He owns neither large nor small livestock, not even chickens. He neither hunts nor fishes.

His jeweler's trade nets him more than his fields.

324 The blacksmith and niaka are representatives of metalworking.
316 Let us now proceed to stonework.

The makers of crushing stones are called nanlora in Mossi, from nan, "crushing stone" and lora, "to shatter."

Our quarrymen look in the bush for large stone slabs resting on the ground, and whenever possible raised in some manner above it. They draw lines on these large flat stones with karité and soumbara, the size of the crushing stones they wish to extract, and then they gather wood under the slab and set it afire. They allow the fire

The Mossi grow tobacco in fields around their
248 4 INTRODUCTION
249 homesteads, where they also cultivate their most important cash crops, cotton and indigo, which are used in the manufacture and dyeing of cotton cloth.

136 The wild fauna of Mossi country include several species of antelope, deer, monkeys, rabbits, snakes, and wild pigs. Elephants roam the beds of rivers and streams and often destroy cultivated fields, while lions and hyenas distress the people by attacking livestock. The pools and rivers of Mossi country are inhabited by turtles, crocodiles, and various species of scaled and scaleless fish. Chickens, muscovy ducks, and half-domesticated guinea fowl are the most valuable species of birds.

231 The Mossi have long been famous for their splendid donkeys and
[492] horses. Donkeys are sometimes ridden, but they are used primarily as
[439] beasts of burden. Horses are important for military and ceremonial purposes and for export to the tsetse-fly zones to the south. The Mossi raise two main types of cattle: a zebu-like animal in the northern regions and a
[439] dwarf variety in the south. These animals are raised primarily for their milk and for export, and are seldom killed for meat until they are fairly old. Goats and sheep provide the main source of meat. Hog-raising is not wide-
[771] spread, and seems to be declining in importance with the increased ob-
[178] servance of Islamic food taboos, which is on the uprise even among people who are still pagans.

135 The subsoil of Mossi country is not well known, but so far there have been no major discoveries of mineral deposits. The only known gold field
[301] remained unworked in aboriginal times. The Mossi do not like to wear
[325] gold ornaments, preferring jewelry worked from imported copper and
[439] silver. The northern Mossi worked their local iron in aboriginal times, but those in the south obtained this metal from caravan traders.

175 The nineteenth-century reports of Barth and other European travelers
439 indicate that the Mossi conducted a rather extensive foreign trade. At least
[443] six caravan routes passed through their territory, and traders such as the Hausa and Mandingo visited the important Mossi trading centers at Yako, Pouitenga, and Ouagadougou, where they exchanged Saharan and forest products for Mossi livestock and cloth.[5]

101 The Mossi belong to the Voltaic culture area, a name given by Delafosse to the regions drained by the Black, Red, and White Voltas and their tributaries. The area embraces parts of Mali, the Ivory Coast, Dahomey, the Upper Volta, and northern Ghana.[6] It includes a vast congeries of peoples such
[197] as the Dagomba, Mamprusi, Dagari, Birifo, Senufo, Gurmanche, Gurunsi, Lobi, Bobo, Tallensi, Konkomba, Dogon, Somba, Fulse, and Ninisi, all of whom speak languages belonging to the Gur or Moshi-Grunshi group of

12:Skinner E-4,5 (1955-1957) 1962
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all of local manufacture and in great abundance. Local cloth is also very abundant. However, there are scarcely any imported objects salt, kola nuts, copper rings and extremely rare European fabrics. The salt always comes from the north. During my stay at Wagadougou I saw the arrival of a convoy of five or six small-sized mules loaded with this merchandise." Crozat felt that the Wagadougou market with its mainly local products was inferior to the markets at Woroudoy and Bobo-Dioulasso which he found less crowded, but which were, in his words, "true *entrepots* of imported merchandise."

Tauxier gives us a better picture of the goods found in the markets of Mossi country before the Europeans arrived. His reports list few imported products except salt and kola nuts. The preponderance of goods sold were such local foodstuffs as maize, manioc, peppers, tomatoes, squash, karite or shea butter, locust-bean balls, locust-bean flour, rice and a local variety of potatoes. Other foodstuffs included were honey, beer, butchered meat, chickens, and guinea fowls. Tobacco both for chewing and smoking was also available, and so was hemp for making rope. Raw cotton, cotton thread, cloth and tailored cotton garments were also present, and so was indigo for dyeing the cotton materials. Other goods included hides, sandals, pouches, amulets, iron items such as axes, hoes, knives, scythes, locks, clubs and spearpoints, bracelets and anklets made of copper by the lost-wax process, baskets, mats and hats made out of local grasses, pottery, pipes and wooden stools (Tauxier 1912 : 466 ff.). By 1914 Mangin could add little to this list of local products, sold in the markets, but added such foreign items as "matches, glass trinkets, handkerchiefs, basins, dishes, perfumes, and even firecrackers" (Mangin 1921 : 53).

The markets of contemporary Mossi society contain all of the articles found in pre-European times and those seen there by Mangin in 1914. In the larger markets one now can find such additional items as bicycles, razor blades, plastic raincoats and other plastic products, and the latest "rock 'n roll" records from the United States. The goods found in the smaller district and village markets tend to be of the traditional variety. But even here it is possible to buy refined cane sugar, matches, plastic necklaces, shoe polish, nail polish, toilet water, glass beads, costume jewelry, chinaware, and glass and enamel containers. In some of the smaller markets it is even possible to buy wheat bread made of imported flour, and bottled beer and soda water. The more different types of goods entering the larger markets, the richer the variety found in the smaller markets, since local merchants are quick to take advantage of the prestige value of any new produce and introduce it into the rural areas. The only barrier to this type of commercial activity is the relative poverty of the rural people.